

Green sunfish

Lepomis cyanellus



Similar Species: Other sunfishes have smaller mouths

Identification: Gill-cover lobe dark with light margin, body color drab green, mouth extending to middle of eye.

In South Dakota, the green sunfish is found statewide, except for the Little Missouri and Minnesota River drainages. It is found in heavy cover such as large rocks, brush piles, or thick aquatic vegetation when predators are common. Green sunfish tolerate murky water, low oxygen levels, and silty bottoms and live in slow-moving streams, ponds, and lakes. Insects, crayfish, and small fish make up the bulk of their diet. Green sunfish spawn in the spring when water temperatures reach about 70 F in the same manner as other sunfish. They rarely exceed 1/2 pound in South Dakota waters.

